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Philip Moore

A HERO TRANSITIONS TO THE ANCESTORS

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
GCA 2012 AWARDS

Traditions of the Guyanese Wedding

Happy Father's Day

Masquerade Lives!
2012 Folk Festival Theme

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June Editor
Dr. Juliet Emanuel

Copy Editors-
Edgar Henry & Lear Matthews

Layout and Design by
Claire A. Goring & Ashton Franklin

Cover Design
Ashton Franklin, Claire Goring

Contributors:
Peter Halder, Lear Matthews,
Juliet Emanuel, Edgar Henry,
Carl Hazlewood, Percy Haynes
Ravi Dev, Eusi Kwayana
Francis Quamina Farrier
Dr.Vivian Rambihar
Charles Liverpool
Ronald Lammy

Photographs
Arlington Weithers
Harry Voglezon - Lit Hang Pics
Andrea & Salvador DeCaires
Dennis Braithwaite-Lit Hang Pics

Acknowledgements
Kaieteur News,
Andrea & Salvador DeCaires

GCA Media Team
Ave Brewster-Haynes (Chairperson),
Juliet Emanuel, Edgar Henry
Lear Matthews, Claire A. Goring,
Muriel Glasgow, Ashton Franklin,
Margaret Lawrence,
Francis Quamina Farrier

Please join our Facebook group,
Website: *www.guyfolkfest.org*

GCA Secretariat
1368 E.89 Street, Suite 2
Brooklyn, NY 11236
Tel: 718 209 5207

Masquerade Lives!

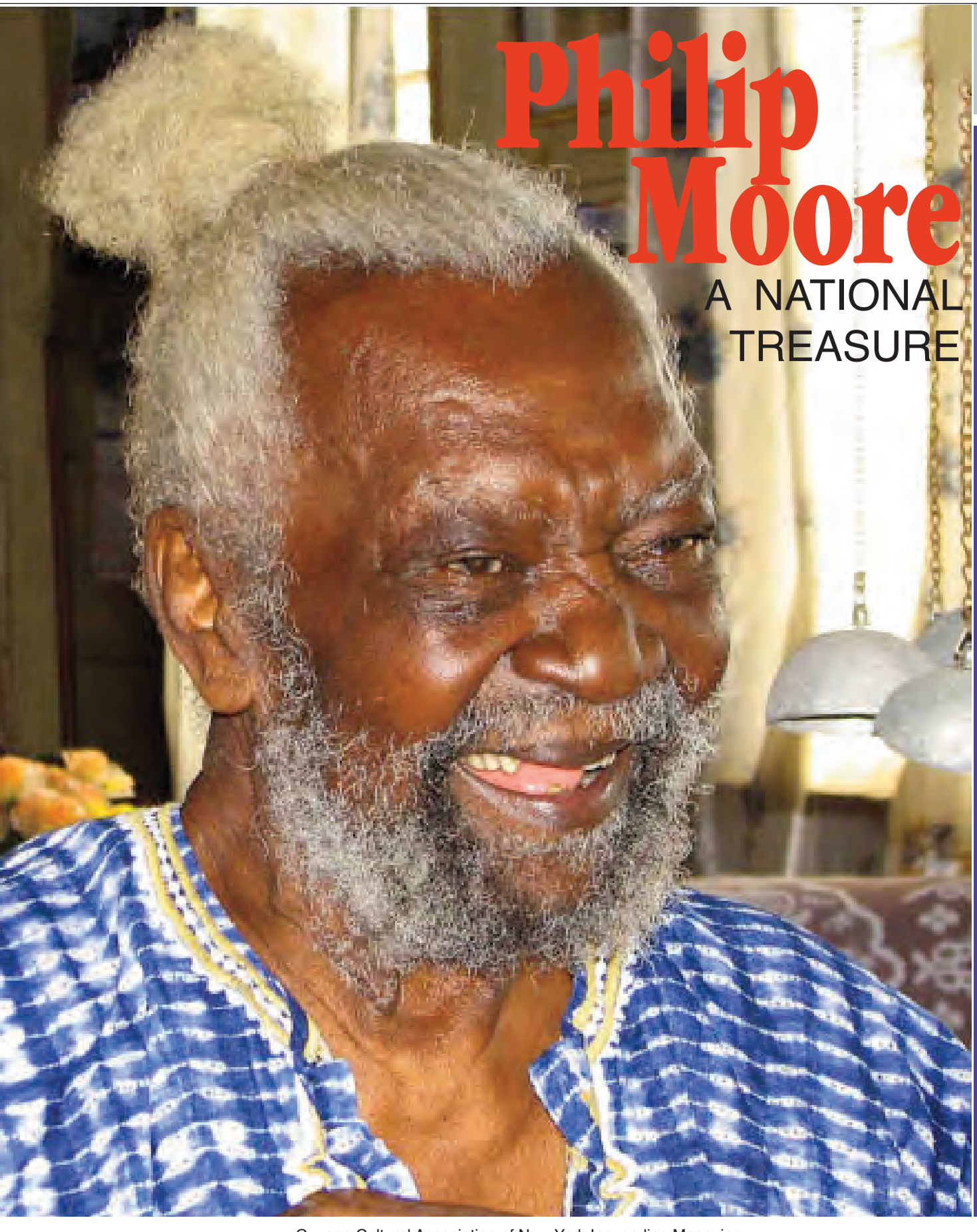
Masquerade Lives is the theme for the eleventh year of Guyana Cultural Association of New York, Inc. Throughout this issue you will read about the GCA events that will explore and define the focus for 2012. In addition, this edition is a celebration of lives well lived. Therefore, as you experience through words and pictures the joys, struggles and tenacity that typify the culture of the people of Guyana throughout the Diaspora, do reflect on the past, enjoy the present and move into the future.

This issue is all about life.

Enjoy!

Juliet Emanuel
June Editor

Happy Father's Day!



Philip Moore

A NATIONAL TREASURE

REMEMBERING PHILIP MOORE

Carl E. Hazlewood

"When I carved up to a certain point, I felt that when I was holding a piece of wood in my hand, it seems to me that I was holding the mind of the world in my hand." - Phillip Moore

Since the passing of Guyanese artist and icon Philip Moore, there have been many statements put forth expressing the feelings of those who had directly shared his aura, or had experienced the power of his concepts through viewing his expressive and affective visual work. While many at home and abroad have always recognized his personal energy, Philip Moore's presence, even at a distance, was inspiring and provided an example of independence, hard work and professional conviction even in difficult times. The informal B G group, formed in Brooklyn around Guyana-born collector, Timothy T. Griffith, was named by Donald Locke, who also sadly departed in 2010. The 'BG' reflects their Brooklyn center and is an ironic echo of the old colonial 'British Guyana name. Mr. Griffith was intimately concerned with the welfare and health of Philip over the last several years and provided not only art materials, but the home care the artist needed in his last days. Josephine Williams, known as 'Jo Jo' of the nearby village of Liverpool, faithfully took care of Philip for his family on behalf of Timothy. As someone who knew Philip all my life, and on behalf of the other members of the BG group I would like to take this opportunity to bid him a final goodbye.

Carl E. Hazlewood, Timothy T. Griffith, Bernadette Persaud, Arlington Weithers, Bonny S. Alfonso, Carl Anderson, Dudley Charles.

Below is a small representative selection of responses that express the feelings of loss and appreciation for someone who could truly be called—without hyperbole—one of the national treasures of Guyana.

Guyana is a marvelously dense, unique repository. Its rivers are dark, slowly moving seas that map innumerable paths to hideously forbidding heights where mountains are continuing to rise among splendours undreamt, mute and concealed in a planetary width of green that is the enigma of abundance, out-stressing any logical and political mind. This is where noise is a queer absurdity in the almost succulent harmony that absorbs the slightest trespass. This is where initiations to the realm of imagination begin! This is the birthplace of renowned avant-gardes, the likes of Denis Williams, Aubrey Williams, Edgar Mittelholzer, Jan Carew, Wilson Harris, Walter Rodney, Forbes Burnham, Clyde Walcott, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Clive Lloyd, Martin Carter, Michael Gilkes and other Light Bringers…This is the birthplace of our magnanimous spirit made visible–Phillip Moore–that we may touch it!

- LeRoy Clarke - Trinidadian Artist

From: Of Praise and Petition

For Phillip Moore

Storyteller Drastic Mystic
decipher of ancient hieroglyphics,
hieratic scripts, symbols signs indicators
and metaphors translator of archaic legacy
of primal elemental breath within age of
illusionary modernity.
Phillip impeccable Payé Obeah man
manifestation of human form from
formlessness, carved from invisibility
an emancipated manforce emissary
we celebrate your return to earned
stool amongst illustrious pantheon.

- Marc Matthews - Actor, poet, cultural worker

In the prevailing turmoil of duplicities and falsehoods, he lived, worked extensively and died in Guyana without any taint of dishonour or disrepute. At a time of continuing exodus, he stood his ground for eight decades and rallied around the state. He was a shining example of simplicity, humility and serenity. Yet his creations were profound, always exploratory and with an amazing degree of endurance.

- Cedric L. Joseph

Sometimes when people are described as a living national treasure, I wonder about that. In Phillips case, this was absolute fact. He always existed at the back of my mind, working away in Guyana. He has been a constant source of inspiration. The fact of him working in Guyana always gave me a sense of security and hope. He was a really wonderful artist.

- Hew Locke - International multimedia visual artist

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DESCRIBED BY CELEBRATED PAINTER AUBREY WILLIAMS AS

"THE GREATEST STANDING SCULPTURE IN THE CARIBBEAN"

Philip Moore's **1763 Monument**

Standing 15feet high and weiging 2 1/2 Tons, the 1763 Monument was created by Philip Moore to symbolize 'Cuffy' as a countryman, feet rooted deeply in the soil. Cuffy's pouting mouth is a sign of defiance and resistance; the face on the chest is symbolic of the shield used as a breast plate in mediaeval times and is used as a protection in battle.

In Cuffy's hands are two figures of monsters being throttled. Inspired by the quote "Cast not your pearls before swine nor give what is sacred to the dog", these represent the pig and dog. The pig is symbolic of ignorance and the dog covetousness, lust and greed.

The faces on the thighs represent the revolutionaries of Guyanese history like Quamina and Accara and the fact that Cuffy considered past leaders in solidarity with his revolt. The faces at the back of the head and body represent the leaders; the map of Guyana is a sign of unity among us all.

Arlington Weithers visiting with Philip Moore at his home. GCA Board member Margaret Lawrence presents Philip with his GCA award

PHILLIP MOORE WAS ROOTED IN THE VILLAGE

HE WAS ABLE TO TAP INTO HIS ANCESTRAL MEMORIES

Columnist, Ravi Dev (Kaiteur News, May 27, 2012)

I first encountered Philip Moore at the end of 1979 when I returned to Guyana from the United States for the first time in seven years. A relative told me I had to see this 'monstrosity' that Burnham had erected in Georgetown. The country was in great ferment – earlier in the year, Burnham had declared to Rodney and the WPA that his steel 'was sharper'.

But as I looked up at the massive bronze sculpture from across the square, all I could think was: "Who was the artist that could create such a work? The symbolism was so rich and profound; there was no need for any lecture to apprehend Moore's import. And after that I took time to find out about Philip Moore, this self-taught visionary from the Corentyne. He reminded me of someone I knew well.

I had been raised by my grandparents. My Nana was born in 1896 and his father had arrived from village India. He never went to school and the Hindi he could read was passed on by his father and the elders in the logies. That the world around us was not as we saw it was unquestioned: maya was not an idea – it was their reality. Symbolism was one technique to convey that deeper reality. The blue of Vishnu connoted his infinitude as of the blue sky; the lotus rising out of his navel, the emergent universe, and so on.

That there were different worlds in different dimensions existing side by side, with the spirit of the pitris or ancestors was also accepted matter-of-factly. But what amazed me about Philip Moore was that while my Nana's world view – and mine

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QUOTES FROM PHILLIP MOORE

"A self-trained artist can be spirit taught. What I do practically know is that a man can re-educate his subconscious and the subconscious mind can come back and make his conscious mind super-conscious. And we can get any amount of knowledge that we want through this personal self-induction because, if all the elements of technology came out from the mind of man, the mind of man can develop to re-educate man to release the ninety percent of brain power that is dormant."

Tall Palm Tree

by Eusi Kwayana

Human Star, shining in the east
above the basin of two rivers
lighting your native land

Reading up to recent times in your bed you fell asleep
humanly speaking, but in your creations
you are wide awake
keeping the wisening world aware.
Your Mother, Blessed Orintha
Has a bosom for your cotton –haired, woollen head to nest
Though they lay your African body at the Seven Ponds
May they allow something of you
To rest in Lan-Liv-Man, the village Trinity

One Icon at Babu John
and at Lan – liv- Man another one
With a mere five miles between
This is good for Corentyne
And they abound!
Some play music and some cricket
Things people live by.

Early enslaved Berbicians
Alarmed the hemisphere
Challenged the Netherlands
in 1763 the first, fierce, fiery, frontal fight
that brought the colonial Ogre, who scorned Peace, to his knees;
and they prevailed just short of one year in unequal contest
Shaking empires, only put down by bloody warships
You, Philip, carved their Memorial
And many of us, fools, reviled you
Since all judgments are coloured by the patron's mood

Always your world was wide
You left Sugar cane field for Land of Canaan,
the Jordanite purgatory- school
To purge flesh and leave spirit pure;
Once a novice
Now you have left us Prophecy in Wood
and visionary Word
baffling professors at learned Princeton, where you, a
gues, sowed seedlings
You named the long despised race "Souls in African bodies"
An expansion of your west evangelical pilgrims faith

New key to Respect for humankind
Key to that universal Essence
Challenging the Universe of hypocrisy
Who would not hear your softly -spoken syllables.
You taught "God - Manliness" as your higher creed
Mystic, Sage and Maestro.

In Wood, of all the beauties and utilities
The similes and stories of your Muse
You left us Lady Guyana, in her agony;
Still, still, beautiful Philip,
Still in needless, wasting
And with her as though because of her pain
Maternal deaths and miseries for her Kind
and the dumbing down of voices is in course
but your drums roll and waken
the dead in spirit
O Berbician, O human Star!.

REMEMBERING PHILIP MOORE: WE REMAIN INSPIRED BY HIS LEGACY

My very early boyhood attempts at sculpture were reinforced seeing Phillip's work in the late 1940's at the annual fairs held by the League of Coloured Peoples. Later met him at the Working Peoples' Art Class and was quite intrigued by him...he talked incessantly while working. It was Burrowes who encouraged him to paint. Ther results we know. His concept of "Godmanliness" cuts across the boundaries of formal or organized religions putting man in direct contact with the energies of the eternal spirit. We should pay heed.

- Stanley Greaves - Artist, poet, historian

Philip taught me to be courageous… and he was my hero.

- Victor L. Davson - Artist & co-founder, Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art, NJ

… love your vision flowing into your art
that came with the sun through your window
at the waterchris hotel on waterloo street
…love your philosophy that found gestation
on the jordanite zion hill
you helped establish at wismar;
the defiant spirit you forged into the image of kofi
our symbol of resistance.…
you are a revolutionary prophet ….your spirit will live
on in that "natural mystic in the air"
and when the gusting winds we pray for
shall come to give us pause
to listen and to hear :
send d wind o lawd!
from atlantic sward!
blow that good wind from ancestors –
send it surging out of history
gusting with new conclusions –
dismantling archaic institutions;
sweeping old debris and flotsam–
insisting new constructions of our future resolutions;
scattering fools in their confusion!

you will be in that wind my friend…

- Joan Cambridge - Novelist

Dr. Adeola James' comment that to appreciate his work we'd all have to do some more learning rang true with the comments President Janet Jagan made on the occasion of [the screening of] my 1995 videographic feature 'An Ancient Soul - The Art of Philip Moore' at the national art gallery. She said to me that before seeing it she never understood or appreciated Philip Moore's work and bought copies for her visiting associates.

- Errol Ross Brewster - Former head,
The Burrowes School of Art

PHILIP MOORE WAS ROOTED IN THE VILLAGE

Ravi Dev *from page 6*

– was passed down orally in an unbroken (albeit increasingly attenuated) line, Philip Moore seems to have been directly in contact with the deeper reality simply through the power of his mind from boyhood.

The mind, we are taught, is the 'sixth sense' – connected to the other senses – that reaches outwards to the physical world. But ultimately, its wisdom is a reflection of the inner soul that is part and parcel of the animating spirit of the entire creation in all the various dimensions. Normal minds had to be stilled through meditation so that we may glimpse at the deeper, unified reality. Philip Moore appears to have been one of those very, very rare individuals who was born with this facility 'full blown'.

I am not suggesting that Philip Moore was 'Hindu" but to suggest that all ancient cultures – including those of Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas – accepted the multidimensionality of the universe – or even the multiverse. A multiverse populated with beings most of us are completely oblivious to. Philip Moore was able to unmediatedly tap into his ancestral memories and be in direct contact with these other realities.

The west had begun to glimpse at these truths a hundred years ago – even in its so-called 'unsuperstitious' natural sciences. From Einstein's special and general theories of relativity through quantum theory and string theory, they all speak of realities beyond our senses. Their artistes like Picasso in painting and Henry Moore in sculpture attempted to represent this 'new' worldview. Henry Moore is very interesting since he overtly imitated in his 'modern' sculptures, the 'primitive' art that he studied.

Philip Moore did not need such 'training". What he demonstrated to us in his life is that while he later read many of the canonical texts of myths etc. he had already apprehended the forms of the truths he conveyed without books advising him how to crack the procrustean mind created by 'modern' education. He did not need the 'tools of the master.'

And this is what sets him apart from so many of the activists and artistes that aspire to represent the essence of African (and Indian) culture – and why he was somewhat sceptical of them. The minds of those who came to even an honest realisation of the realities he uncovered with ease, are still clouded by the encrustations of Marxisms or whatever other isms into which they might have detoured en passant.

Mr. Moore was rooted, yes rooted, in the village. This is not an inconsequential aside. The village is the African bequest to Guyana: created after horrors never before and never since inflicted by man on man. It is my hope, for what it is worth, that those that claim to admire and respect him will heed his message to revitalise the villages.

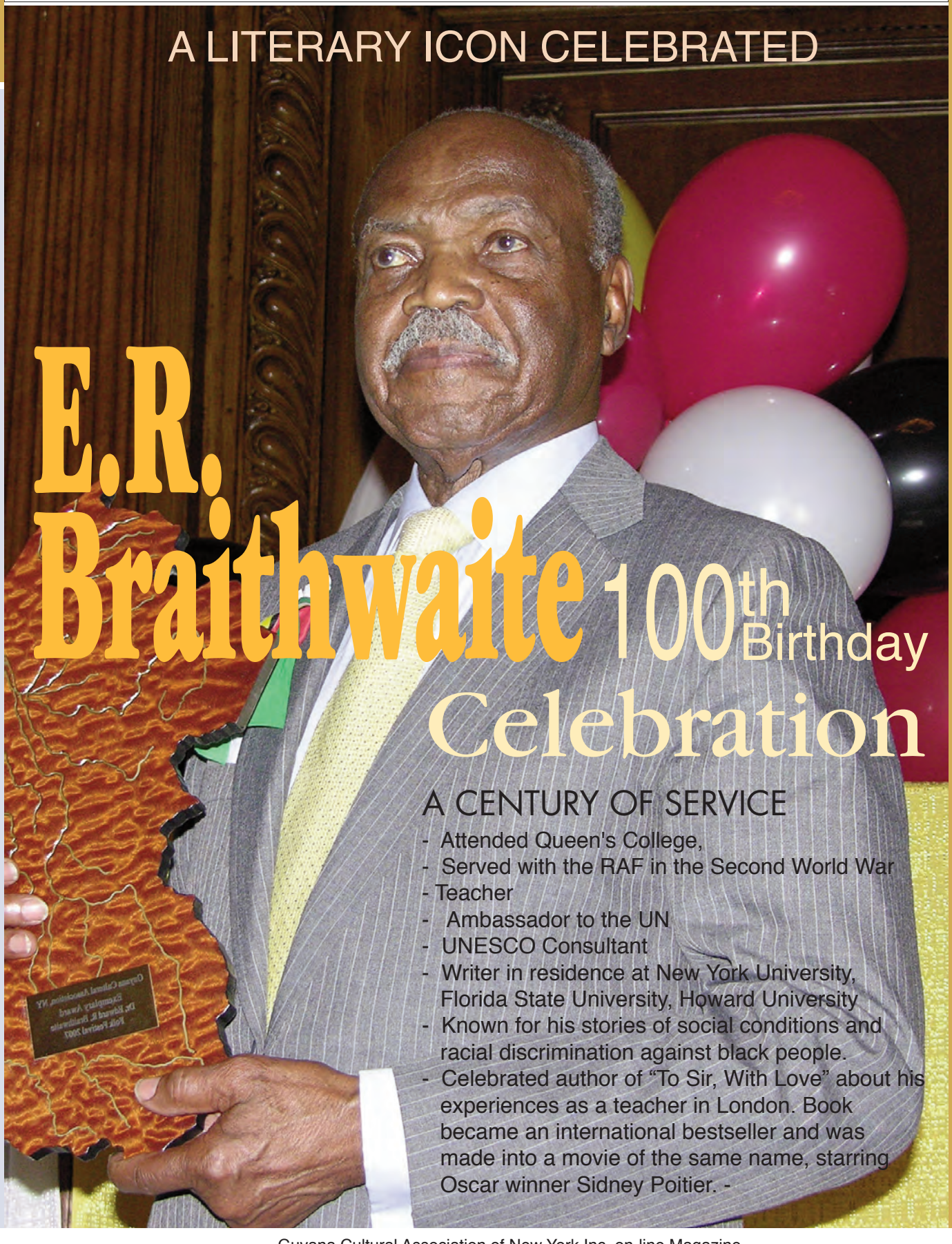
One newspaper this morning (as I write this) has suggested that the government fund a memorial at Mr Moore's grave in Auchlyne, Corentyne. And that citizens fund a Meditation Centre in his village of Manchester, Corentyne, to house his works, so that we and future generations may meditate on them for the upliftment of ourselves and, by extension, our country. I'm ready to throw in my two cents.

QUOTES FROM PHILLIP MOORE

"We can re-educate the minds of people through art. The same as how the Hindus have the murtis, Ganesh, and Krishna and Hanoman-ji on calendars and postcards, the African man too has to get his spiritual heroes and surround himself with them so that they become a part of his everyday life."

This is a shipping barrel made of cardboard that is used when friends and family send packages to Guyana from the United States. Philip had painted every inch!! He poked tiny little holes all over it and inside the barrel he hung tiny Christmas lights. When it was plugged in the lights shone through the holes and it lit up like New York City skyscrapers!

A LITERARY ICON CELEBRATED



E.R. Braithwaite 100th Birthday Celebration

A CENTURY OF SERVICE

- Attended Queen's College,
- Served with the RAF in the Second World War
- Teacher
- Ambassador to the UN
- UNESCO Consultant
- Writer in residence at New York University, Florida State University, Howard University
- Known for his stories of social conditions and racial discrimination against black people.
- Celebrated author of "To Sir, With Love" about his experiences as a teacher in London. Book became an international bestseller and was made into a movie of the same name, starring Oscar winner Sidney Poitier. -

E.R. Braithwaite

Edward Ricardo Braithwaite, born June 27, 1912, is a Guyanese novelist, writer, teacher, and diplomat, best known for his stories of social conditions and racial discrimination against black people. He was born in Georgetown, Guyana.

Braithwaite had a privileged beginning in life: both of his parents went to Oxford University and he describes growing up with education, achievement, and parental pride surrounding him. He attended Queen's College, Guyana and then the City College of New York (1940). During World War II, he joined the Royal Air Force as a pilot – he would later describe this experience as one where he had felt no discrimination based on his skin colour or ethnicity. He went on to attend the University of Cambridge (1949), from which he earned a bachelor's degree and a doctorate in physics.

After the war, like many other ethnic minorities, despite his extensive training, Braithwaite could not find work in his field and, disillusioned, reluctantly took up a job as a schoolteacher in the East End of London. The book To Sir, With Love (1959) was based on his experiences there.

While writing his book about the school, Braithwaite turned to social work and it became his job to find foster homes for non-white children for the London County Council. His experiences resulted in his second novel Paid Servant (1962).

Braithwaite's numerous writings have primarily dealt with the difficulties of being an educated black man, a black social worker, a black teacher, and simply a human being in inhumane circumstances. His best known book, To Sir, With Love, was made into a 1967 film of the same name starring Sidney Poitier, and adapted for Radio 4 in 2007 starring Kwame Kwei-Armah. Paid Servant was dramatised on Radio 4 the following year, again with Kwei-Armah in the lead role. His 1965 novel Choice of Straws was dramatised in Radio 4's Saturday Play slot in September 2009.

In 1973, the South African ban on Braithwaite's books was lifted and he reluctantly applied to visit the country. He was granted a visa and the status 'Honorary White' which gave him significantly more freedom and privileges than the indigenous black population, but less than the whites. He recorded the experiences and horror he witnessed during the six weeks he spent in South Africa in Honorary White (The Bodley Head, Ltd. Great Britain 1975).

Braithwaite continued to write novels and short stories throughout his long international career as an educational consultant and lecturer for UNESCO; permanent representative to the United Nations for Guyana; Guyana's ambassador to Venezuela; and academic. He taught English studies at New York University; in 2002, was writer in residence at Howard University, Washington, D.C.; associated himself with Manchester Community College, Connecticut, during the 2005-2006 academic year as visiting professor, also serving as commencement speaker and receiving an honorary degree.

TRIBUTE TO E.R. BRAITHWAITE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE AMBASSADOR

For a small country, Guyana has produced its fair quota of outstanding individuals. Among these, nary a one might be found to match the exploits and the accomplishments of Ted Braithwaite – fighter pilot, teacher, writer, diplomat, centenarian and patriot.

A fledging Guyana was jostling to catch the eye of the world when he placed us, and himself, on the map with the tale of his travails in a British school.

"To Sir, With Love" beckoned us to recognize what subsequently revealed itself to be a certainty: Here stands an individual unmatchable in strength of principle, depth of erudition and devotion to excellence.

'Tis as well he is one of us. Otherwise we might have had to invent him.

Happy Centenary, Sir!

Bayney Karran
Ambassador of Guyana
to the United States

STILL THE TEACHER

MUCH TO BE LEARNT FROM HIS 100 YEARS OF WISDOM

Francis Quamina Farrier

Braithwaite and Farrier in London, England in 1980

Former Military officer, Educator, Diplomat and Author of the bestselling book "To Sir, With Love", ER Braithwaite, has now achieved what very few of us achieve; he is now a Centenarian. Born on June 27, 2012 in Georgetown, British Guiana, E.R. Braithwaite has reached that special milestone while still enjoying fairly good health. What an achievement! I met Dr ER Braithwaite almost fifty years ago.

At that time he had already become an internationally famous and respected personality. His Best selling autobiographical book, "To Sir, With Love", had catapulted the Guyanese ex-British Air Force Officer, way above the altitude which he flew in those fighter planes, during World War Two. Since my youth, I was an avid reader, especially of Guyanese authors such as Edgar Mittelholzer, Jan Carew, and of course, ER Braithwaite. When "To Sir, With Love" was available in Bookstores in Guyana, I bought a copy immediately. It was riveting reading. Later, when it was announced that the famous author was going to visit his homeland Guyana, I decided that I would go and meet him, and ask him to autograph my copy of "To Sir, With Love". He was staying at the Hotel Tower on Main Street in Georgetown. I phoned, introduced myself, and told him that I have a copy of his book and I would be pleased to have him autograph my book.

He was most accommodating, telling me when I could come to the hotel and have the book autographed. On that our very first meeting, he made me feel like a long lost nephew. It seemed like there was an instant bonding. At that very time, I was in production of one of my earliest one-act plays for a Club Night at the Theatre Guild Playhouse on Parade Street in Kingston, and I invited him to attend, which he did. That sealed our relationship; my hero in a way, became a fan of mine. ER Braithwaite saw in me as a Youngman, someone who he could invest in and arranged a Personal Scholarship for me to attend a Summer Course in Journalism and Theatre Arts at the Banff School of Fine Arts, University of Alberta, in Canada.

Over the years, we have been in constant contact. We visited each others homes from time to time over the years; in Guyana, in England and in the United States. During those years, I have had the opportunity of interviewing him on a number of occasions for radio and for television. There is one thing which I found very interesting. It was mutually agreed that I would not go soft on him during any interview. He readily welcomed the hard questions and responded to all of them.

While in the Foreign Service as Guyana's Permanent Representative to the United Nations or Ambassador to Venezuela, ER Braithwaite brought his own vast experience as a citizen of the world which benefited Guyana greatly. Even after retiring from Guyana's Foreign Service, Dr E.R. Braithwaite has kept in touch with his fellow Guyanese, including the Guyana Cultural Association of New York, who has honored him for his service to Guyana. Of course, Dr ER Brait waite is not quite as active as he used to be, but if you have the opportunity to sit with him and discuss life in this modern world, now that he is a centenarian, one can still learn quite a lot.

He is still the teacher he was so many years ago. And in this modern world, there are still things which are perennial as the grass; respect for others and giving of your best at all times. Those who continue to learn from him, can still reflect on the song, "To Sir, With Love", Even as "Sir" is now among those special human beings around the world, known as "Centenarians".

PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, BARACK OBAMA

CARIBBEAN AMERICANS HAVE SHAPED EVERY ASPECT OF OUR SOCIETY ...

IN MUSIC AND LITERATURE, AS SCIENTISTS, ENGINEERS, ENTREPRENEURS, SOCIAL & POLITICAL ADVOCATES AND IN THE MILITARY

Individuals and families from Caribbean countries have journeyed to America's shores for centuries. Some were brought here against their will in the bonds of slavery. Some immigrated to America as children, clutching a parent's hand. Others came as adults, leaving behind everything they knew in pursuit of a better life in a new world. Generations of Caribbean Americans have sought to ensure their children and grandchildren would have the freedom to make of their lives what they will, and during National Caribbean-American Heritage Month, we celebrate their rich narratives and recognize their immeasurable contributions to our country.

Caribbean Americans have shaped every aspect of our society – enhancing our arts and humanities as titans of music and literature, spurring our economy as intrepid entrepreneurs, making new discoveries as scientists and engineers, serving as staunch advocates for social and political change, and defending our ideals at home and abroad as leaders in our military. Their achievements exemplify the tenacity and perseverance embedded in our national character, and their stories embody the fundamental American idea that when access to opportunity is equal, anyone can make it if they try.

As we reflect on the myriad ways Caribbean Americans have shaped our country, we join in commemorating the 50th anniversaries of independence in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, and we reaffirm the bonds of friendship we share with our Caribbean neighbors. This month, let us celebrate the essence of the Nation we all love – an America where so many of our ancestors have come from somewhere else; a society that has been enriched by cultures from around the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2012 as National Caribbean-American Heritage Month. I encourage all Americans to celebrate the history and culture of Caribbean Americans with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

GCA SIXTH ANNUAL LITERARY HANG

PUTTING THE WORD IN PRINT

Juliet Emanuel

The Sixth Annual Literary Hang was held on Saturday, June 9th, 2012. The first event in the 2012 GCA season it lived up to expectations. In an architecturally beautiful space set within the grounds of Flatbush Reformed Church, 890 Flatbush Ave, Brooklyn, NY, wordsmiths and aficionados of the word gathered to listen to and discuss the literature of Guyanese and other writing friends in a warm and encouraging atmosphere. As always the program included non Guyanese.

The focus this year was on publishing. The event started with a general "Meet the Authors" session and then segued into a roundtable, "The Art of Getting Published." Here was concentrated and lively discussion about all aspects of publishing including the creation of art for the cover, the preparation of the manuscript, editors, agents and the e-book. During this session Ashton Franklin introduced two forthcoming works: Post Emancipation Villages in Guyana Making World History by Eusi Kwayana and The Cat of Muritaro by Peter Halder.

Next, the writers read extracts from their published works or works in progress to an appreciative and supportive audience. The presenters, whose excellently crafted efforts were in several genres, included Ashton Franklin, Yvonne McCallum Peters; Muriel Glasgow; Charles Liverpool; Carole Gregory; Henry Muttoo; Dawn Forde Arno; Valerie Coddett; Paloma Mohamed; Philippa Perry; Angela Massiah; John Morris (whose poetry was read by Lear Matthews); Raymond Gordon; Cicely Rodway; Margaret Barrow; Akua Henderson Brown; Maurice Braithwaite and Percy Haynes. Percy Haynes was Writer in Residence for the Literary Hang and remains so for the duration of the season.

In another segment of the program, Maurice Braithwaite was interviewed by Yvonne McCallum Peters about his direction and production of Minty Alley. Minty Alley formed part of the 2011 season and was an adaptation by Francis Quamina Farrier of the CLR James novel of the same name. Clips of the production were on view.

Books were on display and for sale throughout the afternoon. Among these were Greener Pastures; A Mosaic of My Time by Yvonne McCallum-Peters; Ease The Tension by Dennis Nelson and Edgar Henry; Beyond Bourda Green by Percy Haynes; Tropical Palms, Portraits and Rains – the Guyana Floods of 2005 and Path of Freedom: Personal Essays and Poems by Charles Liverpool; Communicating in a Globalizing World—the ABC of Building Sustainable Relationships and Sudden Departure Syndrome by Muriel Glasgow; Poetry of People, Places, Politics and Philosophy: ICHABOD by John Morris; B.G. Bhagee by Philippa Perry; The Ecclesiastical Chronicles, Volumes One and Two by Raymond Gordon, Facing the Wind by Cicely Rodway and Numerology by Bernard Adolphus. Also available were materials dealing with the process of publishing, promotion and publicity and information concerning The Arts Journal edited by Ameena Gafoor. Refreshments were provided at a low cost by Donna Walcott-Mitchell. Contributing to the smooth running of the activities of the day were Ave Maria Brewster Haynes, VP/GCA; Edgar Henry; Claire A. Goring; Rose October Edun; Claire Patterson Monah; Lear Matthews; Alexander Betton-Haynes, Michael Clarke, Carole Gregory, Margaret Barrow, Amanda Hall and Patrick George.

The venue was sponsored by the administration of the Flatbush Reformed Church, Brooklyn, NY under the gracious leadership of Rev. Daniel Ramm. Rev. Ramm was assisted in his deliberations by Associate Minister Cheri Kroon.

The Sixth Annual Literary Hang was been judged a success by all those who attended. Immediately plans were afoot for the next such meeting. It was suggested that the hours of the event be extended and that one section be dedicated to young writers. Work on the latter aspect began immediately. Writers were invited by Carole Gregory to submit their fiction, non-fiction and poetry to a new journal, Black Star.

Indeed, this report does not quite convey the luster of this thoroughly enjoyable event. One had to be there to see that literature is growing in NY and its roots are in Guyana, the Caribbean and the other states of the USA.

EUSI KWAYANA
THE CAT OF

FOLK FESTIVAL 2012- Theme: "MASQUERADE LIVES"

THE GUYANA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK, INC.

11th Anniversary Celebration

FOLK FESTIVAL 2012

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

GCA LITERARY HANG

Saturday, June 9, 2012

1.00 - 7.00 p.m.

Dutch Reform Church

Flatbush & Church Avenues, Brooklyn, New York

GCA SUMMER HERITAGE CAMP

Arts in the Community

July - August, 2012

Flatlands Reformed Church

3931 Kings Highway and E40 Street, Brooklyn, NY

GCA AWARDS CEREMONY

Wednesday, August 29, 2012

Brooklyn Borough Hall

209 Joralemon St. Brooklyn, NY 11209

BY INVITATION ONLY

KWE KWE NITE!

Friday, August 31, 2012

St. Stephens Auditorium

2806 Newkirk Avenue,

Brooklyn, NY 11226

FAMILY FUN DAY

Sunday,

September 2, 2012

(VENUE TO BE ANNOUNCED)

GCA SYMPOSIUM

December 13-14, 2012

Georgetown, Guyana

Venue: The symposium will have access to any of the following venues: Umana Yana, National Library, Theater Guild, or the International Convention Center.

ART EXHIBITION

ART FROM GUYANA AND THE DIASPORA

Jan-Feb., 2013

(DATE AND VENUE TO BE ANNOUNCED)

FOR INFORMATION:
VISIT: guyfolkfest.org
TEL: 718 209 5207

CARIBBEAN HERITAGE SUMMER CAMP

FLATLANDS REFORMED CHURCH

3931 KINGS HIGHWAY, BROOKLYN, NY 11234

A COLLABORATION WITH FLATLANDS REFORMED CHURCH, NY CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS MATHIEU EUGENE AND JUMAANE WILLIAMS AND MATERIALS FOR THE ARTS, TO EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR HERITAGE

JULY 9 2012 - AUG 16 2012

Arts in the Community

OPEN HOUSE REGISTRATION

TUES, JUNE 26, 2012
6.00 - 8.00 P.M.
TEL: 718 209 5207

MUSIC: LITERACY, CARIBBEAN SONG AND THE ART OF THE FOLK SONG

DANCE: TECHNIQUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE MULTIETHNICITY OF THE CARIBBEAN

POETRY & PROSE: STORYTELLING, STUDENTS WILL INVESTIGATE THEIR OWN HERITAGE AND CULTURE

ART: AN INTRODUCTION TO MASK MAKING, SCULPTURE & DESIGN

GCA AWARDS 2012
CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Background

Masquerade, rooted in African festive custom, has been and continues to be, an art form primarily expressed through street performance that traces its development and survival to multi cultural traditions. Emerging in Guyana before emancipation, this "new world" phenomenon is characterized by melodious rhythms, with the principal dance performers including flouncers, Mad Bull, Mother Sally and later additions, Bam Bam Sally and Stilt dancers. They dance energetically to the fife, the snare (aka kittle) drum, the tenor drum, and the steel or triangle. The brightly colored costumes represent the festive mood, while characters, such as Mother Sally parodied the colonial ruling class, thus providing at least temporary psychological and visceral relief.

In the colonial and postcolonial history of our country the dancing, music and general participation reflect the ethnic inclusivity of masquerade. The melding of African, East Indian and European cultures features prominently in the festivities. Earlier characters such as Barbadian "Joe Flounce"; "Goblet Joe"; flautist extraordinaire, and later ones like "Potagee"; dance steps influenced by "Scotts Boy", and new performers in contemporary Guyana masquerade, the peacock and vaquero, are testimony to the Diasporic nature of this unique art form.

It is this tradition, survived to the 21st century, that the Guyana Cultural Association will highlight this year. Indeed, Masquerade Lives!

The Awards Ceremony - An Annual Event

Guyanese nationals receive the Lifetime Achievement Award; individuals are acknowledged with the Exemplary Award; and organizations and commercial entities are accorded the Guyana Cultural Association Award. Youth awardees are either born in Guyana, or have at least one parent who is Guyanese, or of Guyanese descent.

Since 2001 the Guyana Cultural Association of New York has been the leader in recognizing those who have inspired us. This year's awards ceremony will be held at the usual venue in Brooklyn, New York on August 29, 2012. We will acclaim creators and enablers who exemplify characteristics embodied in the history and sustainability of the Masquerade art form. We seek to acknowledge those whose work demonstrates features of perseverance that led to transcendence from hurt to pleasure that enriched the Guyanese society. The winning nominations will show that the spirit of Masquerade lives. We will herald Masquerade stalwarts to proclaim that Masquerade occupies a permanent place in our performing arts culture.

Award Categories

Our awards celebrate outstanding contributors in the following categories:

- Guyana Cultural Association Award
- Guyana Cultural Association Award - Youth
- Guyana Cultural Association Exemplary Award
- Guyana Cultural Association Lifetime Achievement Award

What We Do - Nominations Are Open June 16th to July 9th 2012

Request nominations from anyone or entity and assess the submissions that are complete and on time.

Nomination can be submitted for a person or an entity whose work fits within the theme – Masquerade Lives!

Youth nominations must detail the academic and extracurricular accomplishments that position the nominee above the average in his or her area of scholastic and cultural activities.

Selection Criteria

A selection committee evaluates each nomination considering seven criteria: originality, scope, impact / influence, integration, pioneering spirit, challenges and achievements.

We choose honorees based on:

How much their work has improved their community; or enhanced Guyanese society in general. The impact their contributions have had on creative presentations associated with Guyanese. Confirmation that their effort meets a distinction considered an exemplary model that can inspire others. How their creativity embodies positive cultural attributes that Guyanese admire, or honor, or preserve. The contribution by the Awardee that represents characteristics at a high level of skill. The range of activity can cover a wide array of positive deeds.

For more details on the selection process: Visit www.guyfolkfest.org Tel: 718 209 5207

Nominations Are Open: June 16th to July 9th, 2012

TO ALL THE FATHERS, GRANDFATHERS, UNCLES, GODFATHERS, THE BOYS WHO LEFT THEIR OWN DREAMS TO HELP THEIR MOTHERS WHEN THEIR FATHERS DIED, CHILD FATHERS AND OTHER MALE CAREGIVERS WHO STEPPED UP TO THE PLATE

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

Juliet Emanuel

The idea to dedicate a day in celebration of fathers did not meet with the same enthusiasm as that accorded the establishment of Mother's Day. There were several attempts during the early twentieth century to acknowledge publicly the role of the father in the USA. One attempt occurred on July 5, 1908, in a West Virginia church when there was an explicit honor paid to the 362 men who had died during a coal mine explosion the previous December. That effort was not repeated. Indeed, the current concept of the Father's Day movement is attributed Sonora Smart Dodd who wished her pastors to honor her father, William Jackson Smart, a Civil War veteran war veteran. He had raised his six children singlehandedly. Sonora, his only daughter, on listening to a sermon lauding mothers on Mother's Day, thought that he should be recognized for his outstanding fatherhood on his birthday June 5, 1910. Since there was not enough time to get the event in place the day was postponed to July. On July 19, 1910, apparently at her Sonora's urging, the governor of the state of Washington proclaimed and celebrated the nation first Father's Day. Nevertheless the notion languished for decades with only two Presidents, Wilson in 1916 and Coolidge in 1924, trying to promote the Day. For, commercial interests did not see any value in promoting any recognition of the role of the father and the day itself was not seen as a creditable complement to the hugely popular Mother's Day. Further, fatherlessness, and/or bad fathering, was, and still is, a social condition that impinged on any universal honorifics for the male parent. Nevertheless, for decades, the thirties, forties, fifties, and early sixties, the drive for a permanent recognition of the bonds and care of fathers within families continued.

In 1966 Lyndon Johnson signed a Presidential Proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day. In 1972, 58 years after Woodrow Wilson made Mother's Day official, Richard Nixon established the permanent observation of Father's Day. Some resistance continued. In one daycare center in New York during the early 1970's the Director initially forbade the creation of Father's Day Cards by the children there. She thought that the mention of honoring fathers might have given rise to too many questions on the children's parts. Ironically, this effort was knocked down by the mothers themselves who claimed that they were both mothers and fathers and wanted that position known. Incidentally fathers, linked to the center, received their cards made proudly by their children.

Father's Day is observed on the third Sunday of June in the US, UK and Canada. The acknowledgment of the overall influence of fathers is celebrated in many other countries albeit on different days. For example, in Brazil it is on the second Sunday in August and in Australia and New Zealand, the first Sunday in September.

Perhaps for many individuals the attitude taken towards fathers may be best exemplified by excerpts from the Robert Hayden poem, Those Winter Sundays (1966). Hayden, without sentimentality, expresses the background nature of a father's stern care. Even removing the poem from its North American setting does not dilute in any way the duality, that is imbedded in the role of a father.

Sundays too
my father got up early
And put his clothes on
in the blue black cold,
Then with cracked hands
that ached
From labor in weekday
weather made
Banked fires blaze.
No one ever thanked him.
.....
Speaking indifferently to him,
Who had driven out the cold
And polished my good shoes as well
What did I know, what did I know
Of love's austere
and lonely offices

At present the US government website/ US Dept. of Health and Human Services carries a link, fatherhood.gov . Here one may find information on the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse site. This site connects one to President's Fatherhood Pledge. It is a noble effort to address the role of the father and to encourage among men increased responsibility for their children.

So to all the fathers, grandfathers, uncles, godfathers, the boys who left their own dreams to help their mothers when their fathers died, child fathers and other male caregivers who stepped up to the plate, we lift our hats on June 14th. As we do so, we remember that there is no blueprint for parenthood and we congratulate those of you who have striven to raise the children in your families, nuclear and extended.

LAURENCE CLARKE

APPOINTED TO THIRD POSITION IN THE WORLD BANK

NEW COUNTRY DIRECTOR OF ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE, SAO TOME & PRINCIPE IN THE AFRICA REGION

Obiageli K. Ezekwesili, Vice President, Africa Region has announced the appointment of Mr. Laurence Clarke as Country Director, Angola, Mozambique, and Sao Tome and Principe, in the Africa Region, to be based in Maputo, Mozambique. His appointment becomes effective May 9, 2011.

This level is the third most senior in the World Bank outside of the President and is equivalent of Assistant Secretary General in the UN. It gives him the relative seniority internationally. His most recent assignment was Manager, Southern Sudan Programme and Juba Office.

In this new position, Mr. Clarke's three top priorities will be to provide transformational leadership in the Bank Group's engagement in three countries with diverse development challenges, but each with enormous growth potential; consolidate and innovatively deepen the growing public and private development partnership in these resource-rich economies; and lead and support the staff in implementing the priorities of the Bank's new Africa Strategy while adjusting to corporate realities and opportunities.

Mr. Clarke was selected to this position through the Bank-wide competitive managerial selection process.

Mr. Clarke, a Guyanese, joined the Bank in 1978 as a Young Professional. He has since held a number of positions of increasing responsibility within the Bank Group, including Country Manager in both Zambia and Angola.

Dr. Clarke was born on January 26, 1952 to Ms. Daphne Petronnella Clarke of Plaisance and Mr. Vivian Slowe of Beterverwagting. He attended St. Paul 's Anglican School in Plaisance before transferring to Comenius Moravian School in Georgetown. His successful performance at Common Entrance gained him entry to Queen's College in 1962.

Laurence was an athlete. He was an avid table tennis player. 1964 Table Tennis Junior Champion runner-up, 1968 Under 17 Track and Field champion; Under 17 triple jump school record; 1969 Senior Track and Field champion; 1968 Table Tennis Senior Champion Runner-up; school colors in track and field and in table tennis; Wright Cup Cricket team; and 1969 Queen's College Sportsman of the year. After graduating from Queen's College in 1969, Laurence began his life-long career in banking when he joined the Guyana National Cooperative Bank - GNCB.

In 1978 Laurence left Guyana for the World Bank in Washington DC. He was a financial analyst from 1978-1984 at the World Bank. In 1984 he became the Senior Investment Officer and later Head of the Africa Enterprise Fund (Washington-Kenya). This proved to be his passport Into Africa. He moved to Kenya. This was followed by World Bank Country Manager/Resident Representative assignments to Zambia and Angola.
Along the way, he pursued other opportunities away from the World Bank. Laurence served as the Executive Director, Caribbean Center for Monetary Studies in Trinidad where he worked closely with eight central banks of the Caribbean and for the establishment of a single Caribbean Currency. He was Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Botswana (1991-1995). More recently, Laurence was the Economic Advisor to the President of Liberia, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa 's first Female President.

Laurence holds a Bachelor of Social Sciences (Economics) from the University of Guyana ; a Bachelor of Business Administration (Special Honors Finance) and a MBA (Finance and International Business first Class Standing) from the University of Windsor, Canada; and a PhD in Monetary Economics from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica.

He speaks French, Portuguese and Spanish, not to mention the excellent command of English.

DR. VIVIAN RAMBIHAR

CREATING A CULTURE OF HEALTH FOR THE HEALTH OF OUR CULTURE

Dr.Vivian Rambihar

My father was briefly the Secretary of the Guyana National History and Culture Council, when historian Bobby Moore was the President. Culture and health were separate things then, culture essentially how we live, and health something we have. Now that's history, with health and culture interconnected. They also change, as we adapt in different countries and interact with other cultures.

We have to respond to this change in a dynamic fashion to create a culture of health to ensure the health of our culture. Our health is at risk everywhere, at home and abroad, in the lands of opportunity with advanced health care. The better life and better health abroad may be illusory.

The Immigrant Effect in Canada describes immigrants arriving healthy, with health declining over the next five to ten years. There are many reasons for this; increased stress, unemployment, cultural adaptation stresses, selection of healthy immigrants, etc, but we also eat more, exercise less and stress more, leading to our weight, cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar going up, causing earlier illness. The US Office of Minority Health's website says "Racial and ethnic minorities still lag behind the general population on many health fronts. Minorities are less likely to get the preventive care they need to stay healthy, more likely to suffer from serious illnesses, such as diabetes, heart disease and colon cancer, and they are less likely to have access to quality health care."

This is powerful information, where we can see our future, in time to do something about it.

It tracks through to children and grandchildren and this is a tremendous opportunity to change the course of history for ourselves and everyone else.

Culture holds the key to change. We hold on to culture and customs for various good reasons. But we need to adapt now to the new situation and change. We need to retain the good things about our culture and change the things that cause us harm. We are accustomed to eating certain foods which have too much salt, saturated fat and carbs, and tend to rest when we should be active. Our portion sizes are too large, and our Guyanese hospitality dictates that no one leaves our house without eating or drinking, again, adding on more calories. We reinforce these habits when we get together, rather than promote healthy living.

We need to put health in our culture and make a new culture of health. We should include a health impact or thinking in everything we do and in all our activities and social occasions, and put things in place to make healthy living reflex and automatic. We should address health from the other sectors that impact health, as recommended by the UN. We should make our friends healthy so they would make the community healthy, since health spreads in networks.

Health is part of culture, so we need to use our fabled Guyanese ingenuity and creativity to create a culture of health for the health of our culture.

ABOUT DR. RAMBIHAR

Dr. Vivian Rambihar was born in 1951 at Beterverwagting, East Coast Demerara, attended Queen's College, then came to Canada in 1970 as a Guyana Scholar He completed a B.Sc. at the University of Toronto in two years and graduated from McMaster Medical School in 1975 where he completed Internal Medicine and Cardiology training, followed by sub specialist training at Toronto General Hospital.

With more than 25 years of cardiology practice in Toronto, Dr. Rambihar has been actively involved in research and community health promotion throughout his career. His research suggests that as immigrants we are at increased risk for health problems and need to be proactive now.

Recognized around the world for his pioneering health and health promotion ideas and practice, and a dedicated activist for the health rights of ethnic communities, Dr. Rambihar created an innovative grassroots community program to reduce health risks in ethnic communities. In 1993, he implemented a multicultural cardiology project to address the excess risk of heart disease in South Asians, Native peoples, Hispanics and people of African origin. He has also pioneered the concept of ethnicity and health, particularly heart disease and diabetes.

AT A TIME WHEN THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE IS UNDER SIEGE

FRANK & BRENDA HAYNES CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF MARRIAGE

Percy Haynes

Perhaps, there is some truth in the song by Paula Abdool suggesting that "Opposites Attract". But for my brother, Frank Haynes and his wife, Brenda who celebrate their golden wedding anniversary on Saturday, June 9, there is a different reason for that first glance of mutual attraction between couples leading to marriage. For Frank and Brenda, that different reason for that eventual exchange of rings at the altar is joining hands to improve the community, as they did, through cooperative societies, to enhance the lives of the villagers of West Coast, Berbice in Guyana. It was through his work as the District Cooperative Officer that Frank first met Brenda, school teacher at Number 8 Congregational school and developed the friendship which resulted in marriage.

In an interview, Brenda recalled the role of teachers in the cooperative movement: "Most of the schools on West Coast, Berbice had two cooperative societies – one was the salary earners cooperative society in which teachers were members. We had to save a certain amount of money according to our salary every month and we could get a loan after a number of years. The loan was very useful for teachers when they were endeavoring to do any new project, like building a house. We also had the School Cooperatives where the children were encouraged every week to save a small amount. When they were ready to go off to high school, they would be given their contributions, and that assisted them to buy uniforms and school books".

Brenda recalled how the routine meeting with Frank, who was officer in charge of school cooperatives, blossomed into their marriage at Smith's Congregational Church in Georgetown: "He visited to check on the books and so we became acquainted. As time went on, we became further acquainted. That was when he proposed and we got married".

At this time when marriage as an institution is under siege, I asked Brenda the question: "What is the secret of your golden marriage?"

Brenda replied: "Love consists of quite a number of things- patience, tolerance, determination and caring"

In his turn, Frank gave me his perspective of his golden marriage with Benda which has stood the test of time: "In marriage, one has to determine that you got married; stay married. There will be good days and there will be days that are not as good. You remain firm like the captain. You are not giving up the ship. If we reach a bump on the road, we have to determine how to negotiate the bump. We got to get together on it".

As in all families, Frank and Brenda are particularly proud of their six children, fifteen grand children and four great grand children. The couple will celebrate their golden anniversary in the place they now call home- Toronto, Canada.

A PERSPECTIVE CHALLENGES OF CARIBBEAN IMMIGRANT PARENTS

Lear Matthews

In this period of honoring mothers and fathers, I highlight a seldom explored dimension of the parenting role within the context of the immigrant experience. Living in North America makes Caribbean parents either resilient or compromising in their parental authority.

Migration to the United States generally means anticipation of better life chances , visa-a-vis economic status, diverse educational opportunities and improved wellness. Determination, pride and a good work ethic are instrumental in attaining goals. However, unfamiliarity or discordance with aspects of the new cultural environment tends to undermine the effectiveness of immigrant parents. This may stymie their ability to function at the accustomed level of parental competence, causing tension, ambivalence, and a sense of loss.

STRONG CULTURAL TRADITIONS AND MUTUAL SUPPORT ARE CENTRAL TO THE SUCCESS OF CARIBBEAN IMMIGRANT PARENTING

Against this backdrop, I argue that despite challenges, strong cultural traditions and mutual support are central to the success of Caribbean immigrant parenting. Proud parents often boast of their children's achievements. However, disciplining is impacted by among other factors, Child Protective Laws (certainly necessary and generally more responsibly enforced than in the Caribbean

Take the case of a Guyanese woman who migrated to New York City with two teenage daughters. Her parenting style was undoubtedly informed by engrained cultural beliefs and customs. One of the girls violated the home curfew and Mom engaged corporal punishment in a manner that is customary. She soon found herself being questioned by case workers from the Agency for Children's Services (ACS) and the possibility of having the child placed in foster care. Traumatized by the experience, though supported emotionally by relatives, she was referred to a mental health facility for counseling "to improve parenting skills". Although complying with the mandated "treatment", she vehemently protested: "I am not crazy; I discipline my child the way I always did". Clearly a cross-cultural dilemma.

Draconian immigration policies and an education system that is hardly culturally competent, also affect parents' capacity to provide adequate child rearing. In another case, the sole breadwinner of a Caribbean immigrant family faced deportation under the "Secure Communities Program". His American born children were at risk of being referred to the Child Welfare Department. This situation potentially separates families, diminishes parents' ability to provide and forges "transnational parenting", a tenuous alternative.

It is also important to examine the link between the education system and parenting. Traditionally in the Caribbean, parents tend to perceive the responsibility of educating children as the sole purview of the school system. Fathers in particular, have not been actively involved in the formal education of their children. Indeed some may have been willing, but lacked the skills set.

This is quite different in the North America, where there is an emphasis on parental involvement in children's education. However, not only do some parents fail to attend PTA meetings, but fearing deportation because of their immigration status, others refuse to sign permission forms for students' participation in school activities. Such conditions create tension between parent, child and school, with negative repercussions for the learning experience.

In their attempt to successfully assimilate into American society, immigrant children and adolescents rely on the family, school and protective services as primary sources of guidance and crisis-free adjustment. As we celebrate parenthood, learning to deal with the consequences when divergent cultural practices converge is essential.

Related Note: It is heartening to learn of the recently established Child Care & Protective Agency in Guyana, addressing a perennial domestic problem.

HIGHLIGHTING YOUTH IN THE FOREFRONT OF CREATING POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE

ABUSE IS THE INSIDIOUS SORE WHICH WITHOUT TREATMENT DESTROYS SELVES AND COMMUNITIES, PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY

Oreka Lawson, student BMCC

My name is Oreka Lawson and I'm a native born Guyanese. I had been living in Guyana for the past 20 years until I migrated to the United States of America. During my time living there I attended Alleyne's High School which was located near Bourda market. After migrating to the United States of America I was a student at Manhattan Comprehensive Night and Day High school. There I completed my high school education. In June 2010 I enrolled at Borough of Manhattan Community College where I started to pursue my education in Accounting. This course of study is a delight for me. In this article I will discuss domestic violence against women in our society. It is a subject about which we, as Guyanese, should be open.

In our society women continue to be persons of value and all of us should treat them with respect. Further, we, as women, should not allow ourselves to be humiliated by other individuals, male or female, young or old, who do not know our true value. Indeed we should stand up to those abusers who tend to mistreat us. Specifically, there are many women out there who have been or are still living in abusive relationships with their significant other. The abuser can have a negative effect on the individual's life and also on her family members' lives. Indeed, domestic violence, in any sort of family setting, can lead to the loss of an individual's life. We, as members of a humane and caring community, should try to lend helping hands to the victims in these cases of maltreatment. To extend the caring hand, however, we must acknowledge that there are different types of abuse, some of which may be physical and verbal.

As I observe through the media and in my own limited experience, there are many women in our society, who have been physically assaulted for whatever reasons by their spouses or significant others. Some of these assaults have very severe that they have resulted in the death of the victimized. It is very painful to see or hear about the situation some of us as women have to put up with. As, as a young child growing up, I have seen a lot of women who were physical assaulted by their spouse. And today that pattern of abuse still continues. For instance, one of my neighbors was a victim and still is because she refuses to leave. Further, I recently read a news article about a woman who was killed by her abusive husband. This incident shows that we as individuals should not tolerate this type of treatment because the victim of the attack might not survive.

Verbal abuse is another form of abuse that some women may encounter at some point and time in their life.. The verbal attacker may be one's spouse or some other individual. Unlike physical abusers, verbal attackers use negative words to hurt one's feelings. These negative words can make an individual think very low or unworthily about themselves. This sort of thinking can lead to suicide by the abused. Truly, we as women should not accept this type of behavior from anyone. For instance, I have seen many women who are verbally attacked by their spouses, especially in public, and they will not try to defend themselves. I do think that staying in an abusive relationship is not worth it and we, as women, have the power to put an end to it.

In conclusion, women, should not take any form of abuse. Abuse harms not only us but our loved ones. It is the insidious sore which without treatment destroys selves and communities, physically and mentally.

SUBMIT APPLICATIONS:

Muhammad Ali Writing Award on Ethics

"All I did was stand up for what I believed."

–Muhammad Ali

The National Council of Teachers of English is proud to partner with the Muhammad Ali Center and the Norman Mailer Center and Writers Colony to offer an award for college students honoring Muhammad Ali's legacy of living a life dedicated to high ethical standards.

We are seeking submissions that address relevant ethical topics of this generation. As you identify an ethical issue to address for the purposes of this competition, consider Muhammad Ali's accomplishments and values and how these values address the topic you have chosen. Please visit the Muhammad Ali Center for more information regarding Ali's values.

Prizes: One winner will be selected to receive the following: $10,000 cash prize A week-long writing workshop at the Mailer Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts during summer of 2013 Recognition by the Muhammad Ali Center and the Norman Mailer Center at the Norman Mailer Center's Annual Gala on October 4, 2012

Travel, lodging, and gala tickets for the winner, courtesy of the Muhammad Ali Center

For more information, submission guidelines and judging criteria, visit http://www.ncte.org/awards/student/ali

TEN YEARS AFTER BEING BLINDED IN AN ATTACK, GUYANESE WOMAN GRADUATING FROM COLLEGE

"The universe has been tremendously wonderful to me in allowing me to survive,"

Alex Dunbar, CNY Central.

Like many Morrisville State students, Samantha Wackford has been finishing up her final classes and projects at the college's Norwich campus. Samantha will receive her associates degree this weekend but her journey to the stage is one that few people could imagine. Samantha is blind and has had extensive facial reconstruction surgery.

Ten years ago this week, she was a 17 year old beauty pageant contestant in her native country of Guyana in South America when a jealous ex-boyfriend had her attacked.

"This happened as a result of that person paying someone to throw acid in my face," said Samantha.

Samantha and her mother came to the United States with help from an international non-profit group. She had to learn to live without sight and undergo painful surgeries in Boston. Samantha and her mother eventually returned to Guyana but Samantha decided she needed to learn to live on her own. She made the decision to return to the United States on her own and join a vision loss support program in Boston.

"That was the big moment. That was the big - well you have to do this. You have no choice other than to fight for yourself," said Samantha.

When she returned to Boston, she found her strength, her confidence and a partner. Samantha met Troy Wackford in her program and they decided to spend the rest of their lives together.

"That was a big moment in my life when I realized I'll have the opportunity to love again, because that's something I thought would never happen," said Samantha.

Troy is from the town of Oxford in Chenango County. When the couple moved back to New York so they could be close to his family, Samantha decided she would pursue her lifelong goal of attending college. With help from technology that turns text into voice, Samantha completed all of her classes at Morrisville State's Norwich campus. She became known at the school for her work ethic and drive - as well as not letting her disability hold her back.

"Especially when she does group projects. The other students rise to her level sometimes where as they might not have if she had not been in the group. So it's really a wonderful thing to see," said one of her professors, Cindy Riedi.

Samantha's achievements won't stop at Morrisville State. She's going to SUNY Binghamton and she hopes to eventually have a career helping battered women.

"It's a way for me giving back because I think the universe has been tremendously wonderful to me in terms of allowing me to survive," said Samantha.

"To come from where she came from, and to go as far as she's going to go," said her husband Troy. "I'm there to witness it and to be a part of it."

From tragedy to triumph, Samantha says faith, and the support of family and friends made everything she has accomplished over the past ten years possible.

"I am accomplishing these dreams that I never thought I'd be able to accomplish - and that means a great deal to me."

PRE-WEDDING CEREMONIES:

It is true that every wedding is unique in its own culture, but the events centered around a Hindu wedding are deeply-rooted in ancient customs and beliefs. A Hindu wedding demands at least two weeks of preparation and involves sacred vows being recited to the man and his wife. Vivaha samskara, which is the most important sacrament of a Hindu's life, is the entrance into the institution of marriage which is believed to be the dominant factor in an individual's mental and spiritual development, establishing their footprint in society.

Traditions of The Guyanese Wedding

TILAK CEREMONY

In Indian Hindu culture, the bridegroom and his family is placed in high regard. Therefore, after they get ready for the wedding the first ceremony which locks the seal is Tilak ceremony. It is usually attended by the male members of both the families. The father of the bride along with other associates visits the house of the groom. There he applies the auspicious tilak on the forehead of the groom to ensure that the he is finally ready for marriage and also that the-bride's family has accepted him as their would-be son in law.

A small hawan and pooja also takes place, wherein the priest chants mantra to seek blessings of the Lord.

After this the brother of the bride applies tilak to the groom as a mark of respect and acceptance. He then endows him with gifts such as clothes, sweets, fruits, flowers, garlands and token money. All the other male members of the bride's family such as uncles, cousins etc also perform the same ritual to state their loving approval of the groom.

The ceremony is followed by refreshments to celebrate the new accord between the duo families. After this, the family of the groom also sends gifts for the bride.

PRE-WEDDING CEREMONIES:

KWE KWE (also known as Queh Queh, Kaakalay, Mayan)

The main purposes of marriage in the African society were and continue to be the continuation of the lineage and the granting of legitimacy to sexual relations.

The purpose of the Kwe Kwe is jollification, emphasizing new relationships created by the union, and, traditionally, to provide instructional and psychological preparation to the bride and groom for married life.

Kwe Kwe takes place on the night before the marriage of an African-Guyanese couple. It is an evening of singing, dance, eating and drinking.

At the start of Kwe Kwe, participants arrange themselves in the house or outside on a specially made wooden floor and the Leader sings the solo parts of the songs which are sung in a call-and-response pattern. A song continues until someone shouts "bato-bato". This is a signal to stop and change a song. A new song can be introduced by any member of the group but it is the Leader who raises the tune.

In the communities from which African Guyanese claim their ancestry and traditions, the ability by the mothers or grooms, variously, was much prized and admired. But virginity on the part of the brides was even more prized giving rise to such songs in the tradition of the Guyanese Kwe Kwe as:

Woman lie down and the man can't function
Wu kinda man laika da, laika da
Take yuh calabash, wash yuh bembe
Na me shame a yuh Muma shame.

STAGES OF THE KWE KWE CELEBRATION:

• ***A GANDA*** is opened by sprinkling rum on the floor and around the doors and windows, inviting the spirits of the dead to join in the celebration.

• ***The GREETING SONG*** *"Good Night Ay"* is raised by the Tutor or Caller.

• That is followed by the ***GENERAL INVITATION*** *"Come to my Kwe Kwe"*

• The ***BUYING OF THE BRIDEGROOM,*** the advice on matrimonial matters, the demand for a demonstration of the couple's sexual skill *"Show Me Yuh Science"*

Ends with the ***DEPARTURE SONG*** " *Las Wan, Las Wan"*

YOUNG MAN, WHAT ARE YOUR INTENTIONS TO MY DAUGHTER?

Juliet Emanuel

The connection between June and weddings is linked to the worship by the Romans of their goddess of love, Juno. Apparently June is not as popular a month for weddings as it used to be. However, whenever the nuptials take place there is preamble. So let us imagine that we are somewhere in the country in Guyana. Let us assume that all has been well and that the bridegroom (young) has not been asked by the father of the bride (young), "Young man, what are your intentions to my daughter?" or even better, "Is what you want with me daughter?" and then been told to go about his business. Soon, then, the young man will have written the requisite letter asking for the hand of the young woman in marriage. Let us assume further that family trees have been scoured and no incest, madness or cocobey will hinder the progress towards to the DAY, that is if the initial letter has met with a positive response from the father of the young woman. If there is not to be a long engagement (three to six months should be enough to set the fruits, choose the style of the bride's dress, decide on the number of bridesmaids, flower girls, and appoint the first bridesmaid), then matters have to proceed briskly.

Because of the slight differences that happen in areas let us just remember some important elements even for a simple wedding as the one briefly described here.

The bride's dress will be white. The colors for the bridesmaids should be chosen by the bride but it seems everyone will have an opinion (*I don't look good in pink, etc.*) the choices of headwear and bouquet will be of some concern; the first bridesmaid will wear red or red and white. The bridegroom may be having his first good suit made, but, he has a more difficult task: having asked his friends to stand with him at his wedding, he has to convince his future wife that these guys will look good next to her attendants. Everyone weighs in on all aspects of the wedding. The hire cars, the food, the music, the place for the reception and what all the guests will be wearing. About this time rows are beginning because it would seem that the whole world is expecting to be invited and some feelings may be hurt because of a presumed lack of respect. Now, years ago, if it was a village wedding, no problem. The yard would be big enough, box ovens would be employed and perhaps a plump cow might be wondering why it was receiving extra attention. Town was about the same but the ovens might be those at the local bakery. Regardless of the period, food should be enough for all, although there is that well known Guyanese practice of eating before you go out, so...

There should be two cakes, the ornate bridal cake, with enough almond paste to prevent the liquor from soaking through the the sparkling white icing, and a smaller one, sometimes studded with blue, for the bridegroom. As these are being baked, soaked in rum and iced, (takes weeks) the banns are announced, if that is the practice of the church where the ceremony will be held.

The wedding should take place right after the last set of banns but not before the Guyanese tradition of the Kwe Kwe (children not allowed).

continued on page 28

MUSLIM WEDDINGS

In Islam, it is considered both a religious duty and a social necessity to get married. Thus there is a great emphasis on the religious and social dimensions of the ceremony, which usually lasts about one-and-a-half hours. To make it official, only two male witnesses are required.

Muslim women cannot marry outside their faith. Muslim men can, in principle, marry non-Muslims, as long as they are Christian or Jewish and their children are raised as Muslims. Alternatively, it is possible for a woman to convert to the Muslim faith by performing the Shadada, a simple ceremony in which the convert accepts Allah and Mohammed.

After accepting her offer of marriage, the groom must give the bride a Mahar (gift). Usually in the form of money or gold, it is intended as a dowry for her to use as she wishes.

The engagement period lasts three months, and if the couple aren't married by the end of this period, the engagement contract needs to be renewed. During this time, the bride can only be in the same room as her intended if her father or brother is present and she is covered.

The Muslim calendar works on a lunar cycle, so there are no fixed days for weddings. However, it is forbidden to marry on the two days of Eid, which occur after the feast of Ramadan, and the Day of Pilgrimage. It is also impossible to marry on the Day of Ashura, which falls on either the 9th or 10th day of the Islamic first month (Muharran).

• You can marry at any time of the day.

• There is no fixed notice period required before marriage, as, in Islam, there's no registrar system.

PRE-WEDDING CEREMONIES:

HINDU: MATTICORE & DYE RUBBING

The word matkor (Matticore) is a compound of two words: (i) matti meaning earth or clay and (ii) kor meaning digging.. So Matkor is prayers to Mother Earth.

A bit of clay is dug to the accompaniment of music and singing (and/ or dancing) and is placed in a basket of bamboo known as dalya. This dalya is placed on the head of brides/ bridegroom's sister or phouphou. It is performed at both homes.

Mattcore is performed now-a-days just outside ones home in a clean place. A hoe is carried to dig the clay. It is ritually purified; anointed with a paste of flour by five/seven married women of the family. The lady of the house performs the first action. The paste is applied on the hoe by each of the five/seven women at seven different places. This symbolizes the Sapta matrika, the seven mothers. The vermilion (sindhur) is smeared on the seven areas where the flour paste has been applied. Now the hoe has been sanctified and is ritually fit to dig the earth.

Five or seven women (including the Mother) should place wheat in the dalya (Soop), seven laddu should be placed in the dalya, and seven tikas (anointments) are made in the dalya with Sindoor. Then the bride's or bridegroom's paternal aunt, phouphou or younger sister carries the dalya on her head covered with a piece of red or yellow cloth. A group of women follows her to the clean place just outside the home. Once there an oil lamp is lighted on the lump of dug earth. A hole is dug in the ground and filled with water, simulating a holy river as a place of pilgrimage; worship is offered as in a temple.

Just in front of the hole where the water has been filled, place 7 betel leaves next to each other. On top of that place, 1 betel nut, a little sweet rice or some sweet, and a few boiled Channa (chick-pea) dhal. Dot each leaf with Sindhoor. In front of the betel leaves place 7 camphor and on top of that place some cloves. Light this and pray to the Sapta matrikas and Mother Earth for the long and successful marriage of the couple...

The clay/soil from the now holy place of pilgrimage is then placed in the dalya, carried by the phouphou or sister on her head. As for the bride's or bridegroom's mother, she takes her share in the loose end of her sari, the anchara (a.k.a archara), and deposited in the kalash which is on the Vedi/bedi. The mother and the phouphou/sister are both followed back by a string of women who performed the ceremony while women sing appropriate folk songs.

YOUNG MAN, WHAT ARE YOUR INTENTIONS TO MY DAUGHTER?

from page 26 *Juliet Emanuel*

For a good look at a Kwe Kwe in New York may I suggest that put on by GCA each year for your edification. Matticore and dig dutty are corresponding pre-wedding traditions.

On the great day, with all recovered from the Kwe Kwe and the "stan down done," the bridegroom and his entourage having proceeded to the church and news of his arrival having been communicated to the home where the bride is being dressed, and she having been notified that she has not been jilted, all now wait for the vision of loveliness that is every bride to appear.

Her dress will have received its last stitch as she stands there for a finished dress before the final dressing is bad luck. She will have something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue somewhere on her person. When she arrives at the church her attendants should all be there. She may have already run a gauntlet of sightseers in the churchyard.Then comes the great wedding march and bearing a bouquet of ferns and fragant flowers, a veil of tulle covering her face, leaning on the arm of her father, she walks down the aisle. Then the service follows as is usual unless there is some drama.

Let us hope that the reception goes well. All parties would have been welcomed to the place of the reception by the decorated palm branches over the gate.

At this point the frolic begins. However, generally the real fun starts after the cutting of the cake, the first dance, the throwing of the bouquet and so on. Party time.

A few days later the first bridesmaid, or a female relative of the bride, will distribute slices of wedding cake to the homes various friends of the family. By second Sunday, when the bride welcomes guests into her new abode, all angers may be easing and there may be laughter about incidents during the wedding.

Of course this is only a snapshot of what may have happened at a wedding in Guyana, mainly outside of the city, not too long ago, in June.

TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

GUYANESE WEDDING CEREMONIES:

CHRISTIAN WEDDINGS

BLACK CAKE

The black cake, derived from the English Plum Pudding, is a type of fruit cake which is generally served at Guyanese weddings (Christmastime celebrations too). Black Cake is made with rum, sugar, dried fruits, brown sugar, and a bittersweet caramel sauce called "browning."
The Guyanese tradition entails that the bride and groom eat Black Cake directly after the marriage ceremony.T he cake may also be served to wedding guests.

HINDU WEDDINGS:

ON THE MENU

On the special day, a variety of vegetarian dishes is served.The ceremony is sacred, therefore, no alcoholic beverage is allowed.

Some typical meals are puri, rice, dholl, pholourie, a combination of vegetables such as pumpkin and calaloo, channa with potato and "kheer" - a type of rice pudding.

WHAT THE BRIDE/GROOM WEAR

At Hindu weddings, the bride usually dresses in elaborately decorated saris, gharara, salawar kameez or lahenga.
Green symbolises growth and productivity - the fertility of the bride; yellow is very religious and has an aesthetic significance at a wedding and white signifies purity.

Most dresses carry shawls or "dupatta" and lots of "zardozi" - a type of heavy gold embroidery done over cord.

Every outfit has matching necklace - "gallihars", "earrings" - tarki-jumkha", "sirbindi" - something that drops from the head to the forehead, "churia" - bracelets, and panjas - gloves attached from the finger.

A red dot in the centre of the forehead signifies that the woman is married.

The men are simply dressed in "Jhod Puri" - a heavy decorated gown with narrow, angled pajamas made of silk or brocade. His headdress is called a "phagri" (bridegroom turban). The groom's outfit matches the bride's .

FUNNY WEDDING STORIES

Edgar Henry

Traditionally, and throughout the world, the month of June is associated with marriage and June brides. It is felt that if a marriage is consummated in June, it is perceived as a blessing and the chances of love and affection would unite couples into an everlasting bond.
Whether this is mythical or not, there are some Guyanese customs to which couples would adhere, regardless of the consequences: - Don't look back while going up the aisle; "jumping the broom", a West African tradition; don't ever let a dog eat your wedding cake; don't sweep one's foot with a pointer broom prior to marriage, are a few. The following is a portrayal of some unconventional, funny stories surrounding weddings in Guyana.

COW ITCH POWDER OR STINGING NETTLE
It is believed that a bride must be attired with: "Something old; something new; something borrowed; something blue", merely for good luck and no bad omen would befall the marriage. However, at one Guyanese wedding, the bride ventured to borrow a glove from her dear girlfriend, not realizing she had a crush on her intended husband. The friend willfully laced the glove with *"cow-itch or stinging nettle"* –a powder that would induce intense itching. At the wedding ceremony, before the exchange of vows, the problem began. The itching was very severe. Apparently the powder was transferred and dispersed to certain discrete parts of the bride's anatomy. The itching was very noticeable and created a scene and embarrassment. The groom, unaware of the problem and in disgust, disappeared from the Alter and the wedding was called off. Guess who was waiting outside the church to welcome him?

WEDDING CAKE
It was also understood that if you are single and you place a very small piece of wedding cake behind your right ear, you would enhance and accelerate your chances of getting married. A 65 year old man, who would remain nameless, attended a well known Guyanese wedding ceremony. In desperation he applied enormous amounts of wedding cake behind both ears. To make a long story short, he is still single today at 80.

CATCHING OF THE BOUQUET
This custom is very prominent at weddings, whereby the person who catches the bouquet would be the next to marry. Before the wedding reception the bride made arrangements with her best friend who was a single maid of honor, to throw the bouquet in her direction. Somehow the boyfriend of the maid of honor got wind of the plan. When the bouquet was released from the bride, the boyfriend intercepted and caught the bouquet. The maid of honor was so upset she ranted and raved. One month later the boyfriend got married to someone else.

DOWRY
It is customary at a Hindu wedding for the father of the bride to offer a satisfactory dowry to the groom. As long as the groom does not eat, the father has to continue offering possessions. At one such Hindu wedding, the groom was not satisfied with the house and land that were offered. Not until he was promised a number of cattle of cows and sheep did he eventually eat, which proved acceptance. After the wedding, he went to collect his dowry. However, he was greeted with a severe beating by the family members and he then realized that the father-in-law never owned a house or any cattle in his entire life.

MARRIAGE VOWS
During a wedding ceremony the preacher asked, "Does anyone know why these parties should not be joined together, speak now or forever hold your peace?" One member of the wedding party shouted "The Groom is gay." Without any hesitation the bride blurted out, "So what? I know he is gay, he is always so joyful and happy."

RISING UP FIRST
It is understood that when couples kneel at the Alter to exchange their vows, it is thought that whoever gets up first will live longer than the other. In the haste to get up, the groom accidentally stood on the bride's dress causing her to fall prostrate at the feet of the Pastor.

PIGEONS
It is normal after the wedding ceremony to throw rice grains all over the married couple for good luck as they leave the church. The groom clad in a white suit and the bride wearing a gorgeous white gown were greeted with a huge amount of rice grains landing on their heads. Suddenly a drove of hungry pigeons appeared, stood on their heads and had a feast. Simultaneously the pigeons decided to release some droppings which landed all over the married couple, leaving a pattern-less polka dot design on the white apparel of the couple.
These are all true stories.

It's as if, this can happen

Charles Liverpool

What if the still waters rise each day
to fill the space left by a wayward stone?
What if the day turns into night each time these
waters rise – to the top,
filling the empty spaces?
What if the calm winds blow a certain stillness
in which only you can hear my voice?

What if that voice calls out to you in rapture,
would you respond as if it can happen?
What if the day drifts into night bringing with it
the glow of a golden sunset?
And what if the sunset casts a glow on your
silky smooth complexion, taming
the rush of omnipresent emotions?

And what if the rays lull into the glistening
waters of this great expanse, exuding
a thirst for dipping, playing, or teasing,
with toes in sand, not arm in arm?
But what if the waters maintain their glow,
with the daunting wish
that a sweet something can evoke an emotion?
Then what if the day never comes for the
furthest horizon to reach this deep blue sea?

And like falling leaves, what if they touch the
ground, only to be whisked away
into a blue yonder?
Would they be heard from again,
as if this can happen?
But lo and behold, the sun fades, but softly, and
man's heart races
to the beat of an emotional frenzy.
What if this has already happened?
By the beach…

ABOUT THE POET:

Charles Liverpool

Charles Liverpool is originally from Ann's Grove, East Coast Demerara, but grew up in Buxton. He now lives in Stone Mountain, GA.

He enjoys writing and reading poetry and has written and published (4) books of poetry. His latest book, is on the Guyana Floods of 2005: Tropical Palms, Portraits and Rain, (c) 2009, available at www.publishamerica.net.

SUBMIT YOUR POEMS FOR CONSIDERATION TO: LMatthews10@yahoo.com."

by Vibert Cambridge

PHILIPPA CARRINGTON

B.G. Bhajee

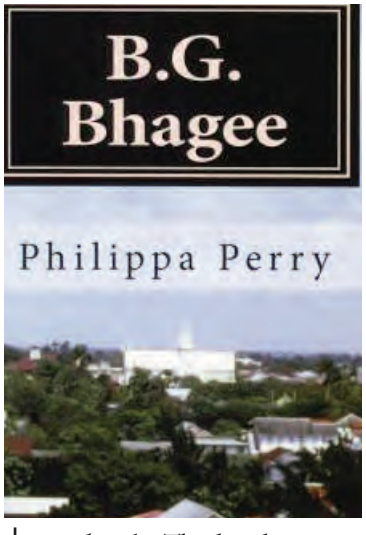
B.G. PAYS HOMAGE TO THE TEACHERS WHO FORMED A GENERATION OF GUYANESE WHO, THROUGH EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT, HAVE DONE GUYANA PROUD

B.G. BHAJEE
by Philippa Carrington
ISBN-10: 1461192196
ISBN-13: 978-1461192190
Available as a paperback and e-Book for Kindle, Nook, iPad,etc. and sold just about everywhere on-line: amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com,smashwords.com

When Philippa Carrington, now Philippa Perry,"topped the colony" in the 1956 "Scholarship" examinations, it brought great pride to First Street,Alberttown. For all of us, it was another expression of the success of a shared community value—academic achievement as the preferred vehicle for progress.

By 1956, First Street—from Cummings Street to Albert Street–had an impressive population of students in secondary school and those who attended Bishops, Queens, St. Stanislaus, St. Roses, and St. Josephs had special responsibilities as it was upon their shoulders that the aspirations of the community resided.

Phillippa Perry's B.G. Bhajee is an important contribution to the growing corpus of Guyanese autobiographies for many reasons. It is an intensely personal story of a family in late colonial British Guiana. It isolates and discusses many common urban themes—the progress of Barbadian immigrant grandparents, hard-working parents, challenging relatives, and the joys and hurts of childhood. It is also a witty story of the competitiveness bred in "bottom house" and primary schools. The book contains memories of school yard games and melodies and talks about the ability to use humor to defuse tension.



B.G. Bhagee pays homage to the teachers who formed a generation of Guyanese who, through educational achievement, have done Guyana proud. Phillippa writes endearingly about Teacher Bourne,Teacher Friday, and Mr. X, the itinerant "lessons" man. B.G. Bhagee is also an intimate travelogue—taking us into the nooks and crannies of the "yards" that made a generation, the journeys to school, visits to the sometimes strange suburbs, and the majestic hinterland. The book discusses how a generation transformed the institutions with which it interacted. In Phillippa's case, it was her interactions with the culture of Bishop's and the mutual transformations.

B.G. Bhagee is not a narrow self-aggrandizing story. It is a statement of a generation's achievement–a generation, although primarily in diaspora, that remains committed to serving Guyana.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Guyanese born Philippa Perry studied in US and Canada, ultimately earning her PhD and becoming a Radcliffe Bunting Fellow. She lectured in Mathematics – first at University of Guyana and later, for too many years, at Queens College (NY). Philippa has returned often to Guyana, but, these days, primarily for funerals. She currently resides in Pound Ridge, NY where she spends her time chasing deer from her garden.

HOW THE ALLIGATOR GOT THAT WAY!

Peter Halder

The Sun owned a giant lake in the forest.

In it was a wide variety of fishes which he prized.

However, from day to day, the Sun observed that fishes were disappearing from his lake. He did not believe that the fishes were doing it on their own. Fishes were excellent swimmers but they could not walk, neither could they live on land. The Sun arrived at the conclusion that someone or something was stealing fishes from his lake on a daily basis, most probably at night when he had set and was not around.

He therefore decided to engage a watchman to keep an eye on the fishes and to report to him as to who inside the lake or on land was stealing the fishes.

The Sun took some time to observe several creatures in the forest and decided to make a water lizard the watchman. He knew that the lizard could live both in the lake and on land.

He shed a ray of his light on the water lizard who was swimming in the lake and said, "As the Sun I give you life so you owe me. The fishes in my lake are my prized possessions. But something in the lake or someone or something on land is stealing my fishes. I would like you to be my watchman day and night and tell me what or who is doing it so I can put an end to it."

The water lizard replied, "Oh mighty Sun. Thou sayest the truth. You give me and all living things life in one way or another. I am therefore beholden to you. Anything I can do for you I will certainly do it. I will be your watchman over the fishes."

"Thank you ," replied the Sun, "you will live long and prosper."

Alas, the water lizard was not as vigilant as he should have been. He had a female lizard friend living among a thick set of weeds on the bank of the lake and another on the limb of a greenheart tree. He failed in his promise and duty to watch constantly and intently over the fish in the lake.

Annoyed, the Sun dismissed the water lizard and looked around to find a new watchman. He decided on alligator. The alligator spent part of its time basking on the banks of the lake and the other part in the lake. It also spent its nights in the lake which is when the Sun believed most of the fishes were stolen. In those days, the alligator was smooth skinned. It had no scales on its head, its back or its tail.

The Sun approached the alligator and said, " Alligator, as the Sun I give you life so you owe me. The fishes in my lake are my prized possession. But something in the lake or someone or something outside the lake is stealing my fishes daily. I would like you to be my watchman day and night and tell me who is doing it so that I can put an end to it."

"Oh mighty Sun," replied the alligator with a wry grin, "thou speakest truly. Thou givest me and all living things life in one way or another. I am therefore deeply indebted to you. Anything I can do for you I will certainly do it. It will give me great pleasure to be your watchman. You can rely on me to keep both of my sharp eyes on your prized fishes. I will report to you who the thief is when I find out."

"Thank you alligator, you will live long and prosper," said the Sun. Too late, the Sun found out to his chagrin and horror that it was the alligator who was the predator stealing and eating his fishes in the lake to satisfy his hunger.

HOW THE ALLIGATOR GOT THAT WAY! *Peter Halder*

from page 34

Filled with anger, the Sun grabbed a cutlass and attacked the greedy alligator on the bank of the lake. He slashed the alligator longways and sideways along the head, body and tail. The scars later became strong, thick scales.

Within an inch of losing his life, the alligator pitifully begged the Sun for mercy.

"Please, Sir Sun, please," pleaded the untruthful alligator, "save my life, save my life. If you do I promise to give you my beautiful daughter to become your wife."

The Sun stopped slashing.

"Okay then I will stop and save your thieving life but only if you keep your promise to give me your daughter as my wife in the next five days before the rainy season starts," he said.

"I do so hereby truly promise to give you my one and only beautiful daughter as your bride five days from now," said the alligator grinning even though it was slashed up, because it was still alive.

Now alligator had no daughter. His offer to the Sun was only a lie to save his life. But he knew that if he did not keep his promise, the Sun would find a way to destroy him.

That night, when the Sun had set, the alligator sat on the bank of the creek and gazed steadily at the moon. Eyes filled with the light of the moon, he cast his glance at a wild plum tree nearby. A brilliant idea formed in his mind.

The next day, the alligator approached the tree and using his sharp claws, sharp teeth and long, strong tail, trimmed the tree of all its branches and bark, leaving a trunk about six feet in height. He then proceeded to sculpt the trunk into the shape of a beautiful female.

Closely observing his handiwork when he was finished, he was not blind to the fact that he did not do a good job of sculpting.

The next day, he visited his friend the woodpecker who was busy at work on a coconut tree which grew alongside the lake.

"Mr Woodpecker," shouted out the alligator, "have you ever seen a beautiful young girl?"

"Sure I have," the woodpecker replied, "I have seen them often when I fly over the nearest village. But why do you ask?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, I have never seen one. However, I am sculpting one so I need your kind and most valuable assistance to peck my feeble sculpture nearby into the shape and form of a beautiful young lady so that no one, except a human can tell the difference," begged the alligator.

"Sure I will. Anything to oblige. But it will cost you a few small fishes for my friend the crane."

"No problem. But you must finish by tomorrow afternoon and I will have the fishes for you," said the alligator.

The woodpecker completed the work as promised and the sculpture looked as real as a live damsel.

When the Sun came by the fifth day, the alligator offered him sculpture as his beautiful daughter and then ran speedily and plunged into the lake.

The Sun married the sculpture but soon found out he had been outsmarted once more by the scoundrel alligator. He nevertheless gave it life.

From then on, fearing the Sun, the alligator with scales on his head, back and tail, lived in the creek all the time, keeping his body under the water so no one would know it was him below, and only the top of his head and his two small eyes above the water peering at the Sun all the time to see what he was doing.

And the alligator has remained that way until today.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY

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VICTORIA VILLAGE CREOLE BREAKFAST MORNING

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Contact
Claire Goring
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Edgar Henry -
ehenry7255@aol.com

WOODSIDE CHOIR , GUYANA 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Guyana Program:
June 3 (Sun)
Thanksgiving Commemoration Service for 60th Anniversary at Christ Church
July 30 – August 8
Music/Choral Workshop at Bishops' High School
August 9 (Thurs)
Concert at the National Cultural Centre and Launch of Anniversary CD
August 10 (Fri)
Dinner and Award Ceremony
September
Concert - Ascension Church – Berbice
September
Concert – Possibly Lichas Hall – Linden
November - Launch of "Span of Time" CD. The History of the Choir thru' Music and Souvenir Booklet
December 28 (Fri) Traditional Christmas Concert at Christ Church

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